

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7774

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MEXICO 4227

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PORG EGEN UNGA UN MX

SUBJECT: UNGA SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION: A STRATEGY ANALYSIS

REF: STATE 075525; STATE 109215; MEXICO 4101; MEXICO 4068

1. SUMMARY: (A) IN ITS TIRELESS PURSUIT OF THIRD WORLD LEADERSHIP, MEXICO UNDER ECHEVERRIA HAS IN RECENT YEARS BEGUN TO PLAY A PROTAGONIST'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. ONE FACET OF THE MEXICAN CAMPAIGN IS CLOSELY RELATED TO ECHEVERRIA'S PERSONAL DRIVE AND AMBITION; ANOTHER LONGER-TERM FACET IS A DEEPLY-FELT MEXICAN NEED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS INDEPENDENCE OF THE U.S. MEXICO'S ARDENT ESPOUSAL OF CERDS IS PRIME EXAMPLE OF BOTH FACTORS AT WORK. MEXICO'S GROWING IDENTIFICATION WITH THIRD WORLD WILL SURELY PLAGUE US DURING THE 7TH SPECIAL UNGA, THOUGH IT SHOULD BE NOTED THIS TERCERMUNDISTA ATTITUDE IS TEMPERED SOMEWHAT BY PRAGMATIC MEXICAN RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S., WITH WHOM IT SHARES 2,000 MILE BORDER AND VERY INTENSIVE ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

(B) OUR RECOMMENDED STRATEGY FOR USDEL AT 7TH SESSION DETAILED BELOW IS BASED ON RECOGNITION CLEAR-CUT DIVERGENCIES IN INTERESTS BETWEEN THIRD WORLD LEADERS AND OURSELVES, FIRM OPPOSITION TO MISCONCEIVED ROLE OF UNGA AS INTERNATIONAL LAWMAKER, CONFIDENTIAL

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MAINTAINING OPEN CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH

OTHER DELEGATIONS (INCLUDING ADVANCE PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS), AND RECOGNITION THAT OVERLY "HARD-NOSED" U.S. OPPOSITION CAN HAVE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFECT. LOOKING EVEN BEYOND 7TH UN SESSION, WE BELIEVE THAT U.S. MUST FIND SOME STANCE BEYOND MERE OPPOSITION, HOWEVER FIRM OR GENTLE.
END SUMMARY

2. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESIDENT LUIS ECHEVERRIA, MEXICO HAS ACTIVELY , EVEN FIERCELY PURSUED A LEADERSHIP POSITION IN THE THIRD WORLD, AND AS A RESULT HAS BEGUN TO PLAY A PROTAGONIST'S ROLE IN MANY INTERNATIONAL FORA. A NOTABLE EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE MEXICAN SPONSORSHIP OF THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES (CERDS), APPROVED AFTER BEING FORCED TO A VOTE IN THE UNGA LAST DECEMBER. MEXICO'S TOP LEADERS HAVE SPARED NO EFFORT IN ATTEMPTING TO RELATE MEXICO'S INTERESTS TO THOSE OF OTHER THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES. THERE ARE TWO FACETS TO THE MEXICAN CAMPAIGN: ONE IS A SHORT-TERM INTEREST CLOSELY RELATED TO ECHEVERRIA'S PERSONAL AMBITION, E.G. HE SEEMS SINCERELY TO BELIEVE THAT HE HAS A CHANCE AT THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE, AND, INDEED THE SWEDISH AMBASSADOR TO MEXICO ADVISES US NOT TO DISCOUNT THE POSSIBILITY. ECHEVERRIA ALSO IS BELIEVED TO BE INTERESTED IN A TOP-LEVEL INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENT, E.G. SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS OR SECRETARY GENERAL, FAO. THE SECOND FACET OF CURRENT MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY IS THE DETERMINATION ON THE PART OF MEXICO TO DEMONSTRATE ITS INDEPENDENCE OF THE U.S. IN THIS REGARD, IT IS APPARENT THAT ECHEVERRIA AT TIMES ADOPTS RADICAL POSITIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA TO APPEASE LEFTIST CRITICS AT HOME. INDEED, THE PRESIDENT HAS ADMITTED AS MUCH TO US, AND HAS ASKED FOR OUR "UNDERSTANDING" OF THESE MANUEVERS. HE MAY, OF COURSE, MUCH EXAGGERATE BOTH THE NEED AND THE EFFICACY OF PLAYING TO THE MEXICAN LEFT.

3. MEXICO'S POSTURE AT THE UNGA SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION WILL BE BASED ON THESE FACTS; THUS STRONG MEXICAN SUPPORT FOR THE BROAD RANGE OF G-77 AND NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT (NAM) POSITIONS (GEORGETOWN 0519) CAN BE EXPECTED, PARTICULARLY ON COMMODITY ISSUES AND MATTERS SUCH AS DC-LDC RESOURCE TRANSFER, CONTROL OF TNES, AND TRANSFER
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OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. MEXICAN CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT A POSITION OF LDC SOLIDARITY ON THESE ISSUES, AND WILL NOT ACT PUBLICLY IN A WAY WHICH MIGHT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE APPEARANCE OF SUCH SOLIDARITY. THIS IS TRUE EVEN THOUGH MEXICO DOES NOT DEPEND AS HEAVILY AS DO MANY LDCS ON COMMODITY EXPORTS. IN FACT, MEXICO IS ONE OF THE STRONGEST LDCS IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STABILITY, GIVEN INTER ALIA EXPORT PATTERNS INCREASINGLY FAVORING MANUFACTURES, AND ITS POSITION

AS A MODEST NET EXPORTER OF PETROLEUM.

4. AT SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION, MEXICO CAN OF COURSE BE EXPECTED TO BRING CERDS INTO EVERY CONCEIVABLE MATTER UNDER DISCUSSION (MEXICO 4101). MEXICAN EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD ARE ALREADY WELL KNOWN WITHIN USG (STATE 109215) AND THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE IN UN AND ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL FORA. NO OTHER SINGLE ISSUE IS AS DEAR TO THE HEARTS OF ECHEVERRIA AND HIS CLOSEST COLLABORATORS. AS INDICATED ABOVE MEXICO CAN IN GENERAL BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT VIEWS OTHER LDCS.

5. THIS THIRD WORLD PASSION IS NEW TO MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY. TRADITIONAL KEYSTONE OF MEXICAN INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS HAS BEEN PRAGMATIC NEED TO MAINTAIN CLOSE BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. (WITH WHOM MEXICO SHARES 2,000-MILE BORDER, ENGAGES IN TWO-THIRDS OF ITS TRADE AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS, AND SHARES A MYRIAD OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS), WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MAKING EVERY EFFORT BOTH TO BE AND TO SEEM TO BE INDEPENDENT OF THE U.S. IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN THAT ECHEVERRIA'S SUCCESSOR, WHO WILL BE CHOSEN THIS FALL AND INAUGURATED DECEMBER 1, 1976 WILL SHARE THE INCUMBENT'S AT TIMES SINGLE-MINDED DRIVE FOR THIRD WORLD

LEADERSHIP POSITION (SEE MEXICO 4068). IN FACT, THE DESIRE TO COOPERATE WITH U.S. WHEN POSSIBLE -- OR AT LEAST TO PERSUADE THE U.S. TO SUPPORT MEXICAN POSITIONS -- STILL FORMS IMPORTANT PART OF MEXICAN FOREIGN POLICY, AND WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT USDEL AT UNGA SPECIAL SESSION WON'T ENJOY USUAL READY ACCESS TO MEX DEL. MEXICANS FREQUENTLY ENJOY PLAYING THE ROLE OF LA SPOKESMAN WITH US, AND OUR CONSULTATIONS WITH THEM TEND IN MEXICAN EYES TO DEMONSTRATE TO WORLD THAT U.S. REALLY LISTENS TO THEM, AND RESPECTS MEXICAN CONFIDENTIAL

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VIEWS.

6. MEXICO'S POSITION WITHIN THE THIRD WORLD IS A SPECIAL ONE NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE SIZE OF ITS ECONOMY AND ITS RECORD OF ECONOMIC STABILITY AND GROWTH REFERRED TO ABOVE, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED NATURE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE, AND MEXICO'S CONFIDENCE THAT IT IS CAPABLE OF CONTROLLING WITHIN ITS BORDERS SUCH CONTEMPORARY PHENOMENA AS FOREIGN PRIVATE DIRECT INVESTMENT BY TRANSNATIONAL ENTERPRISES (TNES) AND THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. BOTH OF THESE HAVE IN FACT BEEN THE SUBJECT OF RECENT COMPREHENSIVE MEXICAN LEGISLATION. MEXICANS TAKE A GREAT DEAL OF TALENT AND EXPERTISE TO LA AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS,

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AND THIS ENHANCES THEIR OPPORTUNITIES TO ASSUME LEADERSHIP ROLES. WHEN THIS HIGH LEVEL OF EXPERTISE IS COMBINED WITH AN ALMOST EMOTIONAL DESIRE ON THE PART OF MEXICAN OFFICIALS TO ASSERT PUBLICLY AND FREQUENTLY THEIR "INDEPENDENCE" FROM U.S. INFLUENCE, THE RESULT CAN BE A SERIES OF CONFRONTATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. IT SHOULD BE STRESSED THAT THE MEXICANS OFTEN WELCOME A PUBLIC CONFRONTATION WITH US AS PROOF OF THEIR INDEPENDENCE, SO THAT EFFORTS ON OUR PART TO ASSUAGE A SITUATION WITH PRIVATE ATTEMPTS AT COMPROMISE MAY WELL FAIL. THUS, MEXICO WILL SURELY BE ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE THIRD WORLD DELEGATIONS TO THE SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION, AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO USE ITS LEADERSHIP ROLE TO ADVANCE G-77 OR NAM GOALS, SOME OF WHICH WE WILL NO DOUBT FIND OBJECTIONABLE.

7. STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS: WE BELIEVE THAT THE US DEL AT THE SEVENTH SESSION SHOULD AIM AT LAYING A CLEAR, UNEQUIVOCAL GROUNDWORK FOR IMPROVED UNDERSTANDING IN THE FUTURE BY RECOGNIZING THAT THERE ARE CLEAR-CUT DIVERGENCIES IN INTERESTS BETWEEN THIRD WORLD LEADERS AND OURSELVES ON MANY ISSUES -- DIVERGENCIES WHICH SHOULD NOT BE PAPERED OVER BY AMBIGUOUS "COMPROMISES," BUT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED FOR WHAT THEY ARE. THIS IMPLIES THAT WE WILL OPPOSE PROPOSALS NOT IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST, AND WILL VOTE NEGATIVELY IF WE ARE FORCED

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TO DO SO. SPECIFICALLY, WE SHOULD STAND FIRM IN OUR OPPOSITION TO THE MISCONCEIVED ROLE OF THE UNGA AS INTERNATIONAL LAWMAKER (E.G. EFFORTS TO IMPLY THAT CERDS HAS FORCE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW), AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHOULD ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN OPEN CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER DELEGATIONS, INCLUDING ADVANCE PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS WITH MEX DEL AND OTHER DELEGATIONS AS APPROPRIATE. WHEN THERE IS A CLEAR RECOGNITION OF THE DIVERGENCIES OF SOME INTERESTS, IT IS OFTEN EASIER FOR US TO IDENTIFY OTHER AREAS WHERE COMPROMISE IS BOTH POSSIBLE AND USEFUL.

8. A CAVEAT: IN ADOPTING THESE POLICIES, WE SHOULD NOT BE STRIDENT OR UNNECESSARILY "HARD-NOSED," FOR U.S. OPPOSITION OF THIS SORT CAN HAVE A COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE EFFECT, AND PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF OUR OPPONENTS IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. FOR EXAMPLE, WE SHOULD BE QUICK TO APPLAUD LDC SELF-HELP INITIATIVES, WHETHER OR NOT THESE PROPOSALS INCLUDE U.S. PARTICIPATION. FINALLY, IT IS DIFFICULT TO "BEAT SOMETHING WITH NOTHING," AND IN THE LONG RUN, I.E. BEYOND THE MONTHS LEADING UP TO THE SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION, WE MUST FIND SOME STANCE BEYOND MERE OPPOSITION, HOWEVER FIRM OR GENTLE, WITH RESPECT TO THE MANY ECONOMIC ISSUES WHICH MEXICO AND OTHER LDCA CONSIDER ESSENTIAL TO THEIR INTERESTS.
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